

Dear Mayor McGinn and Councilmember Rasmussen:

The Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee III (CTAC III) is pleased to submit its recommendation for a potential transportation ballot measure. In developing this recommendation, the CTAC III carefully considered the criteria established in Resolution # 31240; the Seattle Department of Transportation's (SDOT's) budget challenges and input from the public related to priority transportation investments. As you know the CTAC III recommendation for the current \$20 Vehicle License Fee (VLF) revenues stressed funding for maintenance and preservation needs while providing some resources for transit and bicycle system improvements. Our intent is that these funds help address the City's significant backlog of transportation maintenance needs. While the existing \$20 VLF is an important revenue source, it does not eliminate the backlog of system preservation needs, nor does it provide the funding required to make significant progress towards the goals of improved mobility for all, safer streets, efficient movement of goods and services, and reduced impact on global climate.

In light of these additional needs, CTAC III did significant public outreach to determine the Seattle residents' highest priority transportation investments and to gauge interest in pursuing additional funding to achieve these priorities. We heard a consistent message from the public that the transportation system must transition to a greater focus on improving mobility through reliable and convenient transit that connects key destinations. Residents have a strong interest in preserving the transportation assets that we have in place, and in making streets safe for all users. People also expressed a willingness to pay for transportation improvements that were consistent with these priorities. A more comprehensive summary of the public input is provided below.

In response to the public input we received and our review of the Department of Transportation's budget, we have developed a recommendation that prioritizes investments in transit, preservation and safety, and key connections that implement the pedestrian and bicycle master plans. These priorities provide significant benefits to all users. The preservation and safety investments include critical pavement repair and restoration projects that improve mobility for freight, transit, motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. Transit investments improve speed and reliability for transit riders throughout the system. We are moving forward with resources to implement the pedestrian and bicycle master plans. We are also recommending that funds be earmarked to maintain the new projects constructed with VLF funds, to ensure that we do not add to the maintenance backlog.

The Committee is providing these recommendations to you within sufficient time for placement on a November ballot, should the Transportation Benefit District (TBD) Board decide to put this before the voters. We have identified funding priorities that could be met with the full \$80 VLF, with the understanding that the Board will have the final determination of the scale and scope of the proposal.

Should the Transportation Benefit District decide a ballot measure is appropriate to fund these additional needs, the CTAC III recommends:

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1. The Vehicle License Fee, which could generate up to revenues of \$27.2M annually.
2. [INSERT % preservation and safety, % transit improvements and programs, % pedestrian and bicycle improvements] split of funding.

We believe our recommendation appropriately balances funding for specific programs, while leaving SDOT the flexibility to accomplish priority objectives in the most cost-effective manner and leverage these funds to make the greatest impact. See the attached spreadsheet for details.

Community Engagement and Public Outreach

Prior to developing a recommendation several community engagement activities were conducted with the participation of all CTAC members. Activities included:

- Statistically-valid telephone survey with 400 participants
- Online survey with 2,160 participants
- Round table discussions with representatives from neighborhoods, environmental groups, business and freight groups, people with mobility challenges, social justice advocates, and public health professionals
- Public workshops in the south, central and north portions of Seattle with more than 100 participants
- Telephone interviews with Asian Counseling and Referral Service Neighborhood House, New Holly - Seattle Housing Authority, Refugee Women's Alliance, Salaam Urban Village Association, Seattle and King County Public Health, Vietnamese Friendship Association and SE Seattle District Council
- Speaker bureaus at the Lakewood Seward Park Community Association, Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Board, Transportation Choices Coalition Event and Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce

The CTAC III met with the Seattle Freight and Bicycle Advisory Boards and solicited their input into the recommendation. The Committee carefully considered their written recommendations, as well as the Pedestrian Advisory Boards.

Based on the outcomes from the public involvement, Seattle residents support a balance of maintenance and new projects with transit rising to the top as a priority. Highlights include:

- City needs to transition from moving cars to moving people and goods
- Improve transit speed, reliability and connectivity
- Make transit system easier to navigate and affordable
- Repair and replace deteriorating infrastructure including bridges
- Make the streets safe for all users
- Pave streets and repair potholes
- Protect what we have, at the very least don't let it get worse
- Add pedestrian and bicycle connections in neighborhoods to local destinations such as schools, parks and trails (Neighborhood Greenways)
- Increase connectivity between neighborhoods
- Keep freight moving

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In addition to identifying the priority investments of transit, preservation and safety, and non-motorized transportation, Seattle residents felt that transportation improvements should address the following values:

- Accessibility
- Equity, both geographic and social justice
- Economic development and freight mobility
- Environmental stewardship

The following paragraphs describe how our recommendation addresses these values.

Accessibility

The proposed funding allocation includes pedestrian improvements such as curb ramps, sidewalks and crossing enhancements that connect neighborhoods with destinations and the transit system while removing barriers to mobility. Including additional funding for the Neighborhood Street Fund Large Project Program allows more neighborhood identified projects to be constructed. Often these projects are sidewalks, other pedestrian connections and open space that increase the livability and walkability of neighborhoods and their business districts.

The Neighborhood Transit Connections category is focused on connecting neighborhoods to transit, allowing commuters, youth, seniors and those with limited mobility to more easily reach their destinations. These projects will provide opportunities to improve the critical “last mile” connections to transit and provide people options to avoid the high cost of auto ownership.

Equity

The proposal addresses the need for improved access to services in underserved communities by providing funding to expand the range of transit options for those with limited mobility or those who live outside convenient walking distance to light rail stations. The Neighborhood Transit Connections establishes an ongoing funding stream that can support innovative partnerships with social services and other agencies to provide improved transit connections. The proposal also funds an Alternative Service Delivery Study to identify the most efficient and effective means of making neighborhood connections in underserved areas. This alternative service could be implemented in partnership with Metro and local service agencies.

In addition, equity is a core value of Seattle’s Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Master plans. Following the criteria in these plans ensures improvements are fairly distributed geographically and where there is need, with particular emphasis on connecting neighborhoods to each other and making vital connections between transit and community services such as schools, libraries, community centers, parks, hospitals and clinics, shopping and employment. They include educational programs to familiarize users with how to use new infrastructure and the benefits of active transportation.

Economy and Freight

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The proposal places a priority on the completing a Freight Master Plan by 2013, by using a modest amount of for the transit funding that would not needed until planning and design is complete. In their recommendation to us, the Freight Advisory Board emphasized the need for a comprehensive freight plan that would identify a freight network and projects to effectively preserve and strengthen it. This plan would guide freight investments needed to maintain economic vitality at the city, state, and national level by supporting Puget Sound ports and Seattle's two designated manufacturing and industrial centers (Duwamish and BINMIC), home to 77,000 industrial jobs. In addition to the freight plan, the proposal funds pavement preservation, with a priority on improving conditions on the busiest arterial routes that serve all modes, including transit and freight.

Environmental Stewardship

The recommendations consider the goals in the resolution of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled. Investments concentrate on modes and programs that have the biggest potential to make walking, biking and riding transit a real option. For example, a stand alone transit investment is valuable, but not as valuable as a transit corridor project that includes sidewalk, crossing improvements, new dedicated bicycle facilities and the ability to market these travel options. By building complete, safe streets for all users, we create a bright future for Seattle that accommodates all users.

Accountability, Reporting and Oversight

Should the TBD move forward with a ballot measure, we strongly recommend an independent oversight committee monitor all expenditures and deliverables. This model has been very successful with Bridging the Gap and we believe it could be accomplished by expanding the existing Bridging the Gap Oversight Committee's mandate to overseeing all of Seattle's voter approved transportation funds.

Another important factor in ensuring accountability is ensuring that the proportion of the City's general fund for base revenues for transportation, in particular for system preservation and operations are maintained as closely to historic levels as possible. While there are many competing needs for general fund revenues, the committee recognizes that there is a very large backlog of system preservation needs that cannot be addressed at the current time. It is critical that Seattle not lose ground in preserving the transportation system by reducing base funding for transportation. In order to carry this out, the TBD should include a clause restricting the supplanting of funds in any ballot measure placed before voters.

Neighborhood Projects

As mentioned before, our recommendation includes increased funding for the Neighborhood Street Fund Large Project Program. The additional funding would provide \$7.5 million every three years for neighborhood driven projects and addresses the strong desire community members have expressed in using their experience and knowledge to guide neighborhood investments.

Bridging the Gap

Based on the telephone and online survey just over half of the participants would support a transportation improvement ballot measure in addition to Bridging the Gap. The city should continue to

DRAFT for Discussion Purposes

educate the public on the work Bridging the Gap is completing and accountability measures in place to minimize confusion between a new ballot measure and the existing property levy. The TBD funds should be seen as complementing the efforts of Bridging the Gap, by supporting progress toward eliminating the backlog of maintenance needs, while implementing improvements that will move the city towards its short term and long term goals.

Proceeds from the Rubble Yard Sale

CTAC III understands that the proceeds from the recent Rubble Yard sale must be allocated for transportation purposes. In the context of CTAC's overall recommendation for the potential funding from an \$80 VLF, the committee supports the Mayor and City Council's commitment of using \$3 million from the sale of the Rubble Yard to fund additional road work in 2011. We also recommend a significant portion of the sale be allocated to the completion of major transportation projects.

CTAC III in the Future

Finally, the CTAC III acknowledges that a ballot measure using the TBD's VLF authority is only one piece of the funding puzzle. However, transportation funding and SDOT will continue to face major challenges and it is imperative that the city remain dedicated to preserving our infrastructure and moving forward with viable options for all modes of transportation. For these reasons, CTAC III recommends that the TBD continue to investigate additional revenue possibilities, such as user fees and transportation pricing mechanisms to address the backlog of transportation funding needs. SDOT should aggressively seek grants and partnership opportunities to expand the purchasing power of TBD funds. The city should also find ways to increase the cost efficiency of project delivery by finding low-cost alternatives for infrastructure construction.

We as a committee have reviewed and evaluated the city's transportation funding system and needs. This proposal is our best recommendation for how additional funding might be allocated. In recommending funding for system improvements, CTAC III recognizes the importance of strengthening transit, biking and walking to address mobility, sustainability and quality of life goals. The work was done in good faith and, although there is some difference in opinions, it reflects the combined sense of the group. Our intent is to provide the TBD with the greatest amount of flexibility in deciding how to proceed.

Sincerely,

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